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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 001099

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/12/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [LY](#) [IR](#) [YM](#)
SUBJECT: DAS CARPENTER AND SALEH FOCUS ON FORUM FOR FUTURE
AND SAADA

SANAA 00001099 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: AMBASSADOR THOMAS C. KRAJESKI, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. This is an action request; see paragraph five.

12. (C) SUMMARY: Deputy Assistant Secretary Scott Carpenter met with President Saleh on June 2 to discuss the Forum for the Future, which Sanaa will host this December, and U.S.-Yemeni relations, with a focus on assistance. The President also raised the conflict in Saada, explaining that the ROYG remains committed to a peaceful settlement, and is currently focusing on dialogue with the al-Houthi insurrectionists. The President announced that he instructed his Minister of Interior and Prime Minister to have an open dialogue with the al-Houthis, to reiterate the ROYG stance that they must hand over their weapons in return for their guaranteed safety. Saleh also presented the DAS with a new dialogue initiative that he is soon to publish, which calls for grievances to be aired and resolved through a dialogue platform in the United Nations. END SUMMARY

Forum for the Future
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13. (C) DAS Carpenter related details about the Forum for the Future and its purpose, citing examples of past forums and stressing the needed cooperation of the ROYG with civil society and the press to make it a success. DAS Carpenter outlined the agenda of the Forum and named press freedom, electoral freedom, anti-corruption, registration of voters, and redistricting as big issues. He advised the President as to the importance of this Forum and said it is expected to bring the Secretary to Yemen, along with numerous other foreign dignitaries. DAS Carpenter informed Saleh that he is currently in Sanaa to attend the first preparatory meeting of G-8 members and former BMENA chairs of the Forum, including this year's Yemeni delegation, headed by Deputy FM Mohy al-Dhabi. Carpenter said that there has been tremendous democratic progress in Yemen, which is part of the reason why Sanaa was chosen as host city. The President responded positively, noting that the ROYG was working hard on naming a board to administer Yemen's new independent anti-corruption body.

Saada: We Want Dialogue
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14. (C) The President then raised the issue of Saada,

explaining that the ROYG remains committed to a peaceful settlement to the conflict, and is currently focusing on dialogue with the al-Houthis. The President instructed his Minister of Interior and Prime Minister to have an open dialogue with the rebels, principally to reiterate the ROYG stance that the al-Houthis must hand over their weapons in return for their guaranteed safety. Saleh also asked DAS Carpenter and the Ambassador if they could press Libya diplomatically to "stay out of Saada affairs." Saleh remained staunch in his stance that the Iranians and Libyans were involved in the conflict, explaining that the Iranian government says one thing, yet Iranian radio and television broadcasts say another and incite violence. Saleh said that since the USG is now on a "honeymoon" with the Libyans, we need to ask them to "stop financially supporting the al-Houthis." Saleh ended his conversation on Saada by saying that the military's position vis-a-vis the rebels is improving.

¶5. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Post recommends that the Department consider approaching the Libyans to make clear to them our policy that Saada is strictly an internal Yemeni matter, and that other nations should not provide material or financial assistance to the rebels.

¶6. (C) COMMENT: December's Forum for the Future will be the most important and logistically challenging event that Yemen has ever hosted, and will require close and intensive bilateral consultations to be successful. This visit by DAS Carpenter was a good first step in that process. The international spotlight that will shine on Yemen in the months leading up to this gathering will also be a useful catalyst for Saleh to resolve the unrest in Saada and make further progress on reforms in order to avoid embarrassment for his government. Whatever support the rebels may or may not be receiving from Iran and Libya, we continue to believe

SANAA 00001099 002.2 OF 002

that the conflict can only be resolved through meaningful dialogue on a political settlement with the al-Houthis' supporters and significant economic development for Saada.
END COMMENT

¶7. (U) DAS Carpenter did not have an opportunity to clear this cable.
KRAJESKI